



Rock and roll is a form of popular music that emerged in the United States in the late Forties and early Fifties. But rock and roll's roots can be tracked back centuries to drum beats in Africa and Celtic folk music in Europe. As people from these regions immigrated to America, they brought their music with them, and as they were exposed to each other's

music, they began to incorporate different styles.

The more immediate roots of rock and roll lay in the so-called "race" music, or rhythm & blues, and "hillbilly" music, or country & western of the Forties and Fifties. Other significant influences include blues, jazz, gospel, boogie-woogie, folk and bluegrass.

The actual phrase "rock and roll" emerged as code words for sexual intercourse in blues songs. In 1922, the words rock and roll appeared on a record for the first time. That record, Trixie Smith's "My Daddy Rock Me (With One Steady Roll)," went on to inspire other blues songs.

In the Thirties, the words were also used to describe rhythms and musical beats, as in Duke Ellington's "Rockin' in Rhythm." In 1947, blues shouter Wynonie Harris covered "Good Rockin' Tonight," which went to Number

One. Cleveland deejay and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Inductee Alan Freed is widely credited with first using the words to describe the rhythm and blues music he was playing on the radio. Over the past five decades-plus, rock and roll has evolved in many directions. Numerous styles of music – from soul to hip-hop, from heavy metal to punk, from progressive rock to electronic – have fallen under the rock and roll umbrella.